



City of Charleston

JOHN J. TECKLENBURG
MAYOR

WEST ASHLEY REVITALIZATION COMMISSION

NOTICE OF MEETING

The regular meeting of the West Ashley Revitalization Commission will be held at 5:00 p.m, August 9, 2017 at 720 Magnolia Road (The Schoolhouse), Charleston, SC 29407.

AGENDA

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| 1. Welcome & Call to Order | Chairman, Councilmember Peter Shahid |
| 2. Approval of Minutes from June 14, 2017 | Chairman, Councilmember Peter Shahid |
| 3. Plan West Ashley | City Staff (15 minutes) |
| • Draft Report Review Process & Schedule
(Revitalization Commission, Public, Stakeholders,
Planning Commission & City Council) | |
| • September, October & November Meetings | |
| 4. West Ashley Identity & History | Charlie Smith, Commission Member
(15 minutes) |
| 5. Public Comment Period | (20 Minutes) |
| 6. Other Business | Chairman, Councilmember Peter Shahid |
| 7. Adjournment | Chairman, Councilmember Peter Shahid |

Details regarding the next West Ashley Revitalization Commission meeting will be announced at a later date, pending the results of discussions at this August 9th meeting.

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, people who need alternative formats, ASL (American Sign Language) Interpretation or other accommodation please contact Janet Schumacher at (843) 577-1389 or email to schumacherj@charleston-sc.gov three business days prior to the meeting.

WEST ASHLEY REVITALIZATION COMMISSION

June 14, 2017

A meeting of the West Ashley Revitalization Commission was held this date at The Schoolhouse, 720 Magnolia Road

Notice of this meeting was sent to all local news media.

PRESENT

Councilmember Peter Shahid, Chair, Anne Frances Bleecker, John deStephano, Chairman, St. Andrews PSD, Morris Ellison, Justin Ferira, Joseph Grant, Harry Gregorie, Diane Hamilton, Donna Jacobs, Councilmember James Lewis, Michael Miller, County Councilmember Brantley Moody, Jimmy Palassis, Mayor John J. Tecklenburg, Councilmember Marvin Wagner and Jonathan Zucker. **STAFF:** Mandi Herring, West Ashley Project Coordinator, Jacob Lindsey, Director, Department of Planning, Preservation and Sustainability, Christopher Morgan, Planning Director.

Approval of Minutes from April 12, 2017 and May 10, 2017

The May 10, 2017 minutes were deferred.

Ms. Jacobs moved for approval of the April 12, 2017 minutes. Ms. Bleecker seconded the motion. The minutes were approved unanimously.

Plan West Ashley Work-in-Progress: Presentation Recap – Ms. Mandi Herring, West Ashley Project Coordinator

Ms. Herring said she would review the planning consultants' work in progress presentation from May 13. That presentation was a result of a few months' worth of research and listening to the input of over 600 community members, Revitalization Commission members, SCDOT, leaders, County Planning, County Transportation, and state PSD. She added that those who were not able to participate will have more opportunities in the future. Dover/Kohl has returned to their offices to work on a draft of a plan to present to the public and Commission before it goes to City Council for approval.

The Plan West Ashley has not been adopted. It is still a plan in progress. The plan will not change zoning or redevelop a parcel. It will establish rules, policies and recommendations that will help guide the City of Charleston and Charleston County in making revisions or changes in the future, and will be used as a communications device to answer questions regarding what is the City doing for West Ashley and what the community wants to see in West Ashley.

The Development Team held four community input sessions, which opened with presentations from the planning consultants and was followed by an input session with community members sitting at tables drawing on maps and answering questions to help decide what they wanted for their area. At the end of the input session each table presented their top ideas for West Ashley, which included location of crosswalks, better connections between neighborhoods and better identity for West Ashley. When community members were also asked for one word to describe West Ashley today the most common response was "congested" but the word "home" also was mentioned frequently. Community members were also asked for one word to describe West Ashley in the future and they responded with connected with other community members, neighborhoods, the bikeway and the greenway, businesses, a strong sense of community thinking about providing places to work, live, shop and have fun.

After the community input sessions there was a five-day planning studio at Citadel Mall. The consultant team and their fifteen team members, who set up workshop space in retail spaces and center court, were there every day from 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. Community members, business people and experts who came to meet with the consultant teams and share their knowledge. The consultants and their team members gave a presentation to the Revitalization Commission on Wednesday on what they heard so far and closed out that week with a work-in-progress presentation. The presentation and a video of the presentation are available on PlanWestAshley.com.

Ms. Herring presented five ideas the consultants were proposing as a draft based upon what they heard during the community input sessions, surveys, polling and charrettes:

1. *Infrastructure and sustainability*

Community Concerns: Flooding, drainage and stormwater; fragmented natural, built and regulatory systems; more park spaces, active recreation facilities; maintenance and enhancement of tree canopy; and underground utilities rather than overhead utilities

Consultant proposals: decrease overall impervious area; direct growth to high ground and low risk areas over time; prioritize maintenance of drainage infrastructure; keep natural areas natural; connect parks, greenways, natural systems and neighborhoods; increase public water access; phase underground power lines with corridor improvements.

2. *Transportation*

Community Concerns: Complete I-526, Glenn McConnell; connect neighborhoods; improve pedestrian and bikeways with sidewalks, crosswalks, separate bike lanes; connect the bikeway and greenway; upgrade transit – bus rapid transit, light rail, park and ride, shuttles.

Consultant proposals: Connecting greenway and bikeway to neighborhoods, commercial destinations, park and recreation areas; connect neighborhoods with sidewalks, crossings, calmed streets; create a multimodal network; transit – lower headways; real time schedule information; transit stop amenities; first and last mile connections; new express to Boeing and Leeds Avenue centers; river crossing options – retrofits, reconstruction or new bridges; water as a transportation corridor

3. *Community Design and Land Use*

Community Concerns: How can properties be redeveloped over time; evolution of strip centers with too much parking and no greenery into places to shop, eat or visit with friends

Consultant Proposals: Preserve community and neighborhood character; beautification at entry points of communities and streetscapes; mixed use centers, employment or live/work hubs throughout West Ashley; reuse empty strip malls and improve character and design; shorten trips by mixing uses and more destinations west of I-526.

4. *Economic Development*

Community Concerns: Update aging shopping centers; more diverse and attractive employment options, 84% of people living in West Ashley work outside of West Ashley; reclaim underutilized parking lots, clean-up, create gateways; for outer West Ashley several small hubs as opposed to one large hub; encourage mix of local businesses; creative strategies for cultivating community such as markets, festivals and restaurants

Consultants Proposals: Reposition West Ashley as an employment center; incentivize reinvestment in existing commercial properties using clear rules; be realistic about expectations for future retail development; provision of right infrastructure to support businesses wanting to come to West Ashley; develop clear message about why West Ashley is a good place to work and live

5. *Housing*

Community Concerns: Keeping affordable housing affordable; vertical mixed use and live/work sites at key hubs such as Citadel Mall; affordable housing near work and shopping; more senior housing; concerns about high density housing and infrastructure demands.

Consultant Proposals: Identify a “palette” of housing types and ensure future zoning allows the right product in the right place; invest in transit to help with housing affordability; develop neighborhood plan to incorporate new housing types in existing neighborhoods; educate the community and policy makers about what it takes to provide housing that is affordable across the income spectrum.

Ms. Herring noted that everything the consultants are working on will take time. They will have a variety of recommendations - some that can be achieved in two to three years, others items in the recommendation will be on a ten year plan and still others are on a 20 year plan.

County Councilmember Moody noted he thought it was well attended. The locations all around West Ashley were great. The best thing he wanted to happen was to have no one say they didn't know about this. Everybody knew about the locations and it was well attended.

Mr. Ellison said what he has heard over and over again was these recommendations are made on the basis of community input. While that is true, in order to be good listeners recommendations, particularly as it relates to transportation and economic redevelopment, have to be based on hard solid data. He noted while the statistic cited 84% of the people in West Ashley go to jobs outside of West Ashley, we don't know where, when or why these vehicles are going. What we have is the desires on the part of the community members to address a problem that everybody recognizes, which is traffic. He didn't see how they could be making effective recommendations without basing the recommendations not only on community input but on hard data, which, right now, is not available. There are companies who can get that kind data such as the North Florida Regional Transportation System in Jacksonville, Florida. In order to deal with transportation, which is a regional issue, and economic redevelopment goes back to an amendment, it has got to be based on more than community input and community wants this. It got to be based on data that works.

Mr. Ellison said he sees the recommendation for BRT (Bus Rapid Transit). He has tried numerous times for the plan to consider options with PRT (Personal Rapid Transit). The technology is now about the point where we can actually take vehicles off the road. He said when he doesn't see considerations of a technology that can take 10,000 vehicles in an hour, not a day, off the road is troubling. The transportation issues need to be addressed not only on what the community wants but on hard data, hard analytics, and what's out there now, what's about to be out there. He was not seeing that. To take into the realm of economic redevelopment, it was easy to put up pretty slides and pretty pictures of what we want to see. He said when you talk about Citadel Mall, he would bet that most of those present in the room don't realize that what they think of as Citadel Mall is not just one owner or one piece of land, Every one of the anchor stores are owned by somebody else. What we think of as the Citadel Mall is really owned by at least six multiple owners bound together by a document called REA, Reciprocal Easements Agreements.

Mr. Ellison concluded that wishful thinking needs to be based on hard analytics and what can be done. Until we get that information, he thinks it's a mistake to base it purely and solely on what the community wants. There is a lot of technology out there and they need to be looking at not only the community wish list, which is very important, but the hard data, which is not there and hasn't been considered.

Mr. Miller said Ms. Herring's report stated about 600 people participated in the community input sessions but he was under the impression there are about 70,000 residents in West Ashley. He questioned if that was a good number of representation from the community to attend those charrettes that will also impact everyone West Ashley and is this something the developers look at.

Chair Shahid said he understood 600 people participating in workshops and charrettes is a good healthy number. The Commission doesn't have a report back from the consultants as it is a work in progress. He cited that Mr. Ellison's statement that the numbers on the analytic data on this stuff is going to be critical so they won't be just basing this on a wish list of what people want.

Chair Shahid said they may be a little ahead of themselves at this point. You take those who participated and those who have a concern about a particular problem. You are not going to get 100% participation or 10% participation. You get those people who are concerned about that particular area. He was impressed by the high level of energy demonstrated by those present at those meetings. They planned for that capacity for both of those workshops. They also had this week long charrette that started on Monday and ended on Saturday where residents were able to come in and express their opinions, in addition to the website where they can receive more input from resident. 600 out of 70,000 seem like a low percentage but when you take that into consideration as to citizen participation and concerns it gives you a playbook as to where you are heading. It's not just a wish list and the Commission is not going to base it all on the wish list of what the public is saying. He said let's get this report in, see what kind of data they have and

after that the Commission will challenge them on the data that is lacking, which is the Commission's job to question the report once it comes in to make sure they hold their feet to the fire that the report is credible. If it's not, the Commission has to redirect themselves. They will take the report, dissect it, be critical and raise their concerns about it. From that they will take it in what direction they need to go and from that particular point something is going to be left there for them to decide.

Mr. Ellison said when a national retailer makes a decision to go into an area they don't base that decision on the basis of what 600 people out of 70,000 people say. They base it on hard analytics, hard economics as well as what the community is saying. His concern is he knows that data is not available right now in the context of transportation. It hasn't been developed. There are companies that develop it but they were acting on what the community is talking about 600 out of 70,000 people, which is important, but it shouldn't drive decisions without knowledge of the analytics. We don't have that right now. The portions of the report that the depend on analytics such as transportation and economic redevelopment need to be based on not only what the community wants but on the analytics in order to understand what is doable.

Mayor Tecklenburg thanked all of the citizens present who participated in the master planning process and the staff. He said transportation is a regional issue. The City allocated some funds last year for a transportation study that would attain some of the kind of data and analytics Mr. Ellison referred to in his comments. They decided since it is more of a regional issue to partner with the Council of Governments (COG) so that the transportation study will be done more holistically. COG agreed to that and recently has hired a firm to do the study. The City is contributing to the COG's study. That study will be more specific.

In reference to BRT study, called the I-26 Alternative Study, which COG did and finished a year and a half ago, Mayor Tecklenburg said it focused on that one corridor, which is the most heavily corridor in our region between Summerville and Charleston. He remarked they supposedly looked at all alternatives. He wanted it known that some of those studies are underway. He felt the overall goals expressed by the public of connectivity, other modes of transportation and better public transportation are valid and they need to add specifics to it.

Mr. Grant said this may be an opportune time for the Commission to consider subcommittees that they initially started off with to be put in place so they would be able to address some of the concerns coming now. The subcommittees will address transportation issue, comments related housing and other things that will come up while they wait for the report coming from Dover Kohl. In reference to the 600 residents who participated in the charrettes, Councilmember Lewis commented they needed to look at publicity again because so many people didn't come out to the listening sessions. He knew it was advertised on television, in the newspapers and notices were sent out to neighborhood organizations. He wondered if the Commission could get some people to make suggestions as to how they can pull a better crowd to make sure the public is informed when these meetings are taking place.

Chair Shahid added Ms. Hamilton brought to his attention as well as for some reason they weren't getting out the word as best they could to certain communities by using mail and other techniques. He thought the point was very critical for them to be aware they need to do a better job of getting the word out.

Ms. Jacobs remarked there was an interesting slide of a question that was posed to the crowd who attended final meeting that asked how you heard about this. The highest percentage was through a friend or somebody asked them to come. She recalled Mr. Dover said you get more people with a personal invitation to a meeting than you do by email. She thought it was encumbered on the Commission to figure out that old telephone chain and that might be how that personal invitation gets involved.

On transportation, Mr. Miller said being on the school board they probably make the transportation in West Ashley a little more complicated simply because they have more parents driving their children to school versus riding the bus. So when they are looking transportation, whoever represents transportation should add to the transportation study consideration of transportation for students whose parents are transporting them back and forth in early morning and late afternoon to schools in West Ashley because of their nature of school choices. Councilmember Lewis mentioned they are also looking at using CARTA buses as a source of public transportation for students. They are also working with COG to create a better bus transportation system where one can use their smart phones to check the bus schedule.

Mr. Ferira said the way he sees what the Commission is working on, everyone is very appreciative to have the opportunity to work in this lovely place. The second priority is building a consensus from high level vision to gradual implementation. First off we are all citizens of Charleston. The second layer is the six things the Commission have reviewed – community vision, structure, transportation, redesign, economic development and housing. He noted some of these are more complex but he thinks they heard the ideals, aspirations and priorities from those 600 people who came out, and the consensus are the priorities they need to tackle. Some of them are easy and some of them are hard. He didn't think they had a consensus around all of them as to the how. In response to Mr. Ellison's comments, he remarked what he heard and what he agreed with is that infrastructure and economic development is complex. Those require greater regularity and greater testing. The chapter on the part of the book isn't even written and it wasn't on the PowerPoint. They needed efforts to help on that beyond the wish list.

Mr. Ferira said there is nothing wrong with wish lists. A wish list is the aspirational set of ideals and that is what they have and what they ascribe to. He felt it was important for them to understand that while they have the great blessing to be here, they also have a budget of zero dollars. We accept that our many wishes are just made up unfunded mandates. They need to think about what's cheap and impractical versus what's easy and what's hard. They need to do the cheap impractical things, and hold on to the expensive and not impractical things. As you look at what will drive this in the long term, they can do three things that are inexpensive in the beginning. He calls them the 3 I's:

1. Identity – They can set what our identity is. He thinks that identity is West Ashley. You arrive at three sides and we can do branding signage. The first time the Commission met, Councilmember Shahid called West Ashley the birthplace of Charleston.
2. Infrastructure – In reference to Mr. Ellison's point, he thinks infrastructure is reasonable and has to be attacked a little bit. West Ashley is a microcosm that plays into that part. We need to figure out our infrastructure need and advocate for infrastructure as part of the whole.
3. Investment – The thing that will get this done is not our wish list but wooing and incentivizing investment. We can turn that investment loose once we create some news. The developers and investors will come from out of town and take that news as an inspiration to paint on the palette that is West Ashley. He said investing begets commerce, commerce begets jobs, jobs beget money to spend, and that begets vitality for all of us.

In reference to Mr. Grant's comments regarding subcommittees, Chair Shahid said they have been playing around with this idea of subcommittees. He noted that many of those present were concerned about affordable housing but part of affordable housing is identifying what Mr. Ferira said about our identity. In October the Commission discusses a Preservation Identity Subcommittee. He said maybe it's time to think about creating two subcommittees: Preservation Identity Subcommittee and Transportation Subcommittee. The Commission had been holding off creating these subcommittees with the exception of the Communications Subcommittee. He asked for a motion to create the Preservation Identity Subcommittee and the Transportation Subcommittee.

Mr. Grant moved to create the Preservation Subcommittee and the Transportation Subcommittee. Ms. Bleecker seconded the motion.

In response to a question regarding the creation of a Housing Subcommittee, Chair Shahid remarked they will now be creating three subcommittees: the Preservation Identity Subcommittee, Transportation Subcommittee and Housing Subcommittee.

Ms. Bleecker moved for the creation of the Preservation Identity, Transportation and Housing Subcommittees. Mr. Smith seconded the motion.

The motion passed unanimously.

In response to a comment by Ms. Jacobs regarding the logistics involved with publicly announcing, scheduling and getting locations for meetings, Chair Shahid said her point was well taken because one of the Commission's first subcommittee meetings had to be cancelled because it was not properly advertised. He said if it's the will of the Commission, let's create these three subcommittees and figure out logistical hurdles they have to address in meetings, including notification, agenda and location. City staff does a wonderful job and he didn't want to overtax them. If they could figure out a way around some of

that stuff and put their head together and get that created, the can take care of the business, create the subcommittees and fill in the blanks.

Chair Shahid asked Ms. Bleecker if he had the authority to appoint the chairs of those subcommittees.

Ms. Bleecker said he did.

Chair Shahid appointed Mr. Ellison as chair of the Transportation Subcommittee.

Mr. Grant nominated Ms. Hamilton as chair for the Housing Subcommittee. Mr. Lewis seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Gregorie nominated Mr. Smith to chair the Preservation Identity Subcommittee. Ms. Bleecker seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Chair Shahid asked the Commission members to review the spreadsheet containing their names and contact information as it needs to be updated.

Meeting Location

Ms. Herring said the Commission could meet at the Schoolhouse through the end of the year. She proposed having a consistent, regular, known meeting location as it is beneficial to the Commission members, the community and the venue coordinators.

Councilmember Lewis moved the Commission make the Schoolhouse the meeting location for the remainder of the year. Ms. Jacobs seconded the motion.

The motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Herring remarked at the next Commission meeting Dover Kohl and some of the team members will present the additional work they have done. She asked the Commissioners to let the staff know if they had any other questions, comments or concerns at this time to relay to Dover Kohl so they are prepared to address those when they come in July.

County Councilmember Moody said his comment to Dover Kohl would be one of the statistics they did not talk about was 95% to 100% of the West Ashley residents' primary mode of transportation is by personal vehicle. Whether it was by choice or whatever, the numbers are numbers and they just made it worse. The consultant from Washington D.C. who told us we were all too stupid for our own good because we drove around in cars - that was not well received. Getting out of your car is not a solution. He disagreed with them a little and he felt the options need to be more comprehensive for the Tri-County area.

Chair Shahid noted City Council was presented with a proposal to add a referendum item to be able to issue \$20 million in bonds for affordable housing. City Council approved the referendum to be decided at the November election.

Chair Shahid said Geona Shaw Johnson, director of the Department of Housing and Community Development. He knew those residents present were concerned with what was transpiring with the Ashleyville/Maryville area. He said Mrs. Johnson will give a general presentation regarding affordable housing West Ashley and citywide. He said following her presentation Commission members will have an opportunity to discuss Mrs. Johnson's presentation and the floor will be opened for public comment.

Affordable Housing Strategies: Maryville/Ashleyville & Area Wide

Mrs. Johnson asked Michelle Mapp, Chief Executive Officer of the South Carolina Community Loan Fund to present with her tonight. Mrs. Johnson wanted everyone to understand that the need for affordable and workforce housing is not just limited City of Charleston or the Tri-County area. It is a national need across the country. She asked Ms. Mapp to give them some of what has been happening on the regional level with the Chamber of Regional Development Alliance.

Ms. Mapp said their organization was founded 12 years ago as the Charleston Housing Trust with a focus on providing access to capital for developers to create and finance affordable housing on peninsula Charleston.

The affordable issue thrives in the City of Charleston. There is no county in this country where a minimum wage worker can afford to rent the average two bedroom apartment or to buy the average price house. In our region we have a regional plan called One Region. Ms. Mapp is currently serving as the chair of the Housing Taskforce for One Region Plan, which was commissioned by the Charleston Metro Chamber of Commerce and Charleston Region Development Alliance. Their goal is to put into place actual staff to address affordable housing.

Housing and transportation issue is a housing issue. Ms. Mapp said we can't continue to separate discussion about infrastructure without recognizing that housing is infrastructure. When we invest in housing, we are investing in transportation. Their goal is to be a financial vehicle to invest in affordable housing in the region. They are finishing up a regional report on the value of place making. In reference to someone stating earlier about not having money, we must recognize that residential property houses are their currency and what we can and can't afford to do is really try to what we are able to bring in via residential property taxes. When we start talking about rapid transit or any sort of transit, think about where there is really good public transit and think about the density in those places relative to the density of Charleston. One of their big challenges is that we live in a really low density community but we want high level community options so there's a disconnect where you have to pay for something but you don't have population or the tax rates to do it. It is being realistic about what those options are, what we can afford and then what we need to do to build the density to be able to afford the transportation and infrastructure options that we desire.

Mrs. Johnson said their mission is to create, facilitate and implement activities and programs that stimulate the community and economic development, expand the supply of available housing and stimulate the construction and rehabilitation of housing, preservation of housing for persons of very low, low and moderate incomes in Charleston's neighborhoods. She noted if you look across the spectrum, many local governments do not provide a department that does what her department does. In some cases they all manage federal dollars similar to what her department does but they do not provide programs that the City of Charleston provides its residents.

Mrs. Johnson said most of the Commission members have heard of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), HOME Grant and the Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA), which are their primary sources of funds. From those funds they are able to build investment housing and leverage other capital through nonprofit and for profit developers to build housing. Currently within her department they manage Roof Replacement Program where they put new roofs on a person's homes, Rental Rehabilitation Program where they work with property owners who got one or two rental units that they want rehabilitated. Lots are made available for affordable housing. They have a substantial rehabilitation program that repairs your house almost down to the piers within those homes. They have a first homeownership initiative where they make houses available to persons who have not owned a home in 3 years or who have not owned a home at all. These programs are currently available through her department. They are primarily funded by federal dollars. Those funds have enabled them to leverage over \$26 million over the life of the program. They help in excess of 3000 residents a year with the residents in the City of Charleston with these programs and the other services they provide.

Mrs. Johnson said one of the things she wanted to make sure everyone understood in what is affordable housing is that affordability is a relative term. What might be affordable to one may not be affordable to others. One of the definitions that is often used is that affordable housing costs no more than 30% of the household's monthly income. Rather than use annual income she suggested using income monthly or biweekly basis since that's what most people deal with. If you begin look at your housing costs and your income, and you take more than 30% of that to pay your mortgage or rent, your house is considered cost burdened if you're paying more than 30%. If you look at the median income, the area median income based on a family of four is \$68,800. Oftentimes when you are going to a bank or when they are willing to assist person who is purchasing housing, they will look at 3 times your income to determine how much house you can afford.

Under the City's housing programs, in addition to ownership housing, they also support the development of **workforce housing**. Mrs. Johnson said one thing Ms. Mapp didn't mention is a few years ago her organization, COG, City of Charleston and Charleston County assessed the needs of housing for the Tri-County area. The need for affordable housing or housing affordable to certain incomes in our community

is expensive. Each one of the housing authorities has waiting lists in excess of 12 months. There are certain strategies the City is employing to help mitigate that need and they are interested other strategies and ideas that will help them to improve that.

In addition to the first time homeownership programs, they also provide funding to both nonprofit and for profit developers who build rental housing. So they either directly or indirectly serve special individuals from 30% to 120% of area median income. When they have the opportunity they also pursue low income housing tax credits, which provide loan funding to ensure long term affordability.

Mrs. Johnson cited the slide showing upcoming first time homebuyer opportunities they are working on that are primarily in the West Ashley community as well as the one on the peninsula, even one in the Rosemont Community. In addition to working with those partners the City of Charleston also facilitates some level of housing through an active bid process they are involved in. Each of them is to provide homeownership versus rental in this case. In particular, last year the City bought 933 Fifth Avenue, 0 Hillsboro Street, which featured one lot there and they have another under contract, and 837 Minnie Street.

Workforce housing is 81% to 120% of the area median income. Mrs. Johnson said future workforce housing opportunities are located primarily on the Peninsula on Meeting Street and East Bay Street. These workforce housing units are primarily rental opportunities. These are being facilitated by private sector developers. The City has no direct funding in these but each one of the developers has to provide 15% workforce housing. City Council currently has before them an amendment to that which will increase the 15% to 20% workforce housing and will increase the affordability period to 25 years. The MU-2 or Mixed Use Workforce Housing Ordinance facilitates the development of workforce housing primarily in the City of Charleston. Currently on the books are 3000 units that will come as a result of the Mixed Use Workforce Housing Ordinance and 15% of that will be the workforce category. She said they are looking at how they can change that again. There are several amendments that will be presented to the Planning Commission next week to increase the amount of workforce housing in the community.

Mrs. Johnson noted Ms. Mapp talked about quality of place and regional perspective. When it says Charleston rents it doesn't mean City of Charleston but it means the Charleston region. Affordability is a major issue in our community and there are strategies they hope to employ to help solve that. The Chamber of Commerce and Development Alliance, who help to bring jobs to the community, recognizes the need. Industry recognizes the need so they are also going to industry to talk about how they can play a more significant role in helping to address this issue.

Mrs. Johnson remarked comments were made previously about funding that we need to facilitate the amount of housing the City does on an annual basis. One of the things Councilmember Shahid mentioned earlier was bond financing. City Council approved a resolution at the last Council meeting to allow for a \$20 million bond that has to be voted on and will be placed on the ballot in the November election. That will improve the availability of rental housing for our community.

The City of Charleston also pursues funding from foundations and others who provide funding for housing. They are requesting \$10 million from the **Charleston Citywide Local Development Corporation** for the purpose of developing home ownership as well as rental housing. The **South Carolina Community Loan Fund**, which is also a community development finance institute, is another source of funding. **Low Income Housing Tax Credits**, which are administered by the state housing authority, provides a great amount of funding for multifamily development to ensure that multifamily housing is developed as well. **Private financing** is also often times a part of the piece that enables us to pull together the funding necessary for affordable and workforce housing.

Other tools used to enhance efforts are **land acquisition**. Mrs. Johnson noted the City purchased land in Maryville and Ashleyville community last year and they also bought infill lots on the Peninsula. They have also assisted other organizations such as Sea Island Habitat for Humanity with purchasing lots to build housing. In reference to changes being recommended to the workforce housing ordinance, they are also seeking **bond financing** that will be on the ballot in November.

They are working with the Historic Charleston Foundation and other organizations in the community to establish a **community land trust** that will enable the allowance of long term affordability period up to 99 years.

Inclusionary Zoning requires every developer that builds housing in the City of Charleston to allocate a percentage of that housing to workforce and affordable housing. The Inclusionary Zoning as gone forward as enabling legislation to the State House. It did receive approval through the Senate subcommittee this past fall and it will be taken up in January. The City was requesting 30% and that is now down to 25%. There are certain incentives that are included in the inclusionary zoning bill for developers providing housing. The other incentives include paying a **fee in lieu of** if they chose not to build that housing that would go into a fund by which we can build affordable housing.

Mrs. Johnson said as affordable housing relates to the Maryville/Ashleyville community, in 2014 and 2015 her staff went to community meetings and asked the residents what they envisioned and what they would like to see as it relates to housing. There is quite a bit of land and part of helping to build affordable housing is finding land. One of the things one has to be cognizant about when purchasing the land is how much the cost because they have to make sure they are able sell that house at an affordable price to the end buyer. Prior to purchasing the land, they spoke to the neighborhood residents and find out what they envisioned and the types of housing they would like to see in their community. They were able to come back a year or two later and purchase lots in the community where they are going to build 9 houses in the neighborhood. In the next year or two they hoped to have those houses constructed. Those houses will target individuals at 80% of the area median income.

Anyone who will participate has to apply for a mortgage. As a part of that package, through other organizations such as the Charleston Trident Urban League and Family Services, they require those who purchase homes go through a credit line, credit counseling process so they will know what they are getting into when they purchase a home. The process by which the houses will be developed and designed is bided out. Meadors Architecture was the successful bidder. Mrs. Johnson said subsequent to having the meeting with the community they went back and showed them designs and asked for their opinions and feedback on what changes they would make and what they would like to see. The houses will include two and three bedroom side homes that will provide up to 1200 square feet.

One of the things they hope to do in building communities and neighborhoods is looking to infill development opportunities. This is what they propose in concert with, not absent of, the neighborhood and the residents within those neighborhoods to make that a reality.

Chair Shahid asked Mrs. Johnson if the referendum is approved for \$20 million, could she translate what that means as far as the number of potential units that would eventually become available.

Mrs. Johnson replied they are not certain yet about the total number of units that will be available. There are proposals for approximately 200+ units in the Cooper River Bridge Redevelopment area. Several land acquisitions opportunities they were looking at will provide from 70 to 100 units. She didn't have the figures at this time but part of their strategy is to purchase land where they can maximize the opportunity for affordable and workforce housing. She added part of what other cities have done successfully is solicited applications and proposals from local developers. There are others that are currently developing affordable and workforce housing. If not for funding, those houses in that development will go forward. They are also continuing to look at those partners in those viable projects by which that block funding can be maximized and can be used to its full potential.

Chair Shahid asked if she has identified what parts of the City to locate these affordable housing.

Mrs. Johnson said it will be across the City of Charleston. They are looking at land in West Ashley, on the Peninsula, City of Charleston James Island, and portions of Johns Island. There is a development group the City worked with years ago and the City will receive or about 15 acres of land will be transferred to the City. She said part of that is looking at when that land will become available. It is not limited to one area of the City because the need is not in one area.

Mayor Tecklenburg introduced Keith Benjamin, the new director of the City's Department of Traffic and Transportation. He comes from the US Department of Transportation and he worked directly with the funding programs offered by the Federal and the local government. He just started two weeks ago.

Mrs. Johnson added transportation is critical for houses that are in the low to moderate category. It adds about 30% additional costs that households have to be cognizant of because of wear and tear on vehicles

and the cost of fuel. She said as Ms. Mapp stated during her presentation transportation and housing are intricately tied together.

Mr. Miller thanked Mrs. Johnson for putting a place holder on the agenda for Maryville/Ashleyville and appreciated her attention on this matter. This particular issue for him is larger and frustrating than a presentation on affordable housing strategies otherwise he appreciated the presentation and the manner it was provided.

Mr. Miller said the reason he asked her to place this on the agenda was because of several community meetings that were held by Representative Wendell Gaillard. The main concern in the Maryville/Ashleyville area is about the sensitivity of the homeowners and the lower middle income neighborhoods. When you talk about neighborhood culture and integrity, the residents of that community are acutely aware of and concerned about the future of not only their homes but their lives. He noted Mrs. Johnson mentioned in her presentation that your home is also infrastructure. So they feel that your home somehow could be an independent issue and your home becomes fragile. It also opens up the neighborhood for attention and aggression. What he got from the members community is that Maryville/Ashley is the only vulnerable area West of the Ashley. There are other communities just as vulnerable but not as vulnerable as these are. But as the redevelopment and revitalization of West Ashley continues other communities will be extremely terrorized, in his opinion, to grow and develop. He questioned how you will manage growth and development after seeing somebody who is stressed by low wages and rising or increases in property taxes. At the last meeting, many people asked will their property taxes increase with the revitalization of the area. If people's property taxes go up that isn't necessarily a bad thing if their income does. If the income doesn't increase but the property taxes does that puts them in a very awkward situation. This is what he is hearing in the West Ashley area, particularly in the Maryville/Ashleyville area. He thinks today is a good day to start that conversation about affordability of that neighborhood.

Mr. Miller said the City of Charleston has a very poor record when it comes to development and how that development impacts low income. Finance for the communities saves families. Property on Mary Ellen Avenue off Rivers Avenue in North Charleston used to be public housing but is now, he understands, multimillion dollar homes. The frustrations he heard at these meetings are not from paranoid people who don't want to see growth in their neighborhood. What they have seen is a trend where development comes in and they don't see themselves in that process, in that growth. They see themselves and their families being moved out of that process.

In conclusion, Mr. Miller said the plan for West Ashley is supposed to come from the community. It comes from the community to the ears of the Commission members and that becomes what they hope is the plan for West Ashley. So as they develop this plan he hoped they don't sidestep or negate the realities of certain communities, or more importantly, the communities of Maryville/Ashleyville.

Councilmember Lewis announced on Saturday, June 24, 11:00 a.m., at the Schoolhouse, he, the Mayor and some of the staff members hoped to meet with the residents of Maryville/Ashleyville to try to answer some questions, put away some of the fears and explain what the City can and can't do.

Mrs. Johnson said one of the strategies that residents can employ ensuring their neighborhood remains viable is to become involved. She remarked Ms. Hamilton provides excellent leadership in the Maryville community. Long before they began to look at property acquisition in that community, they were in the community helping to preserve housing. That is very important as well that families look at how their homes are preserved. That they have proper legal documents should the matriarch or patriarch of that family pass away that things have properly been passed on to those persons they leave behind. There are other strategies that they employ that the City is aware of that the City can ensure that are used in the community so there is an opportunity to ensure that those persons are comfortable with and feel like they are a part of the revitalization strategy.

Mr. Smith said there are two communities West Ashley that pre-existed the suburbanization of West Ashley – Dupont and Maryville/Ashleyville areas. When they began this planning process in the Dupont area it was initiated by the County because the County started the Dupont/Wappoo Study. They brought the City and community into that process. It was a great collaborative effort, it resulted in some really good work done and helped with them going forward. One of the things they realized in their discussion a

few days ago is that Maryville could benefit from that process too. Maryville doesn't have that plan. They haven't had to sit down and think that through and talk about that and decide for Maryville's own sake what Maryville wants to be. He recommended they look at doing some special planning for Maryville and let it come from the community and not downtown.

Ms. Jacobs said she and Diane have done a lot of work on the history. She sent an 11 page document to the Commission because some people don't realize that the first platted subdivision in West Ashley is Maryville. The Dupont area was developed around the same time but not platted out as a neighborhood. The first significant neighborhood West Ashley is Maryville. She said if you start at that place you can add another special history of that area. It is unique. It adds another layer of history.

Ms. Hamilton said when you take a look at Maryville/Ashley you have to go back to the fact that it is connected to the creation of Charleston. The Second Proprietor Governor for this area lived in Ashleyville at the end of Main Street and Fifth Avenue. He was also the Fourth Proprietor and Governor for this area. She felt that is a piece of history that needs to be preserved. She has been doing some research on Maryville/Ashleyville for 7 years. She noted this is her home and she has lived there for her entire life. But it has been in the past 7 to 10 years that she discovered this used to be a town for 50 years from 1886 until 1936. They have been able to research who some of the mayors were of this town. She discovered that she knew one of the police officers because she had no idea growing up that he was a police officer.

Ms. Hamilton said while she attended one of those meetings, the neighborhood didn't just start two weeks ago being concerned about development in Maryville/Ashleyville. They have been doing the research. They have interviewed people. She has interviewed the oldest person, Mr. Nathan Bennett at 90 years old, and several other persons trying to find out what this area was like prior to the construction of St. Andrews Boulevard.

Ms. Hamilton said the neighborhoods want the affordable housing. They are working with Mrs. Johnson on a lot of these committees. The neighborhoods also want a preservation of the history such as the Bennett Street Project where they want to have a building that will be replacing the old one, Mr. Pinckney's house, that they will have an area for a museum in order to preserve that. She said they knew there are some archeological finds at Main and Chickadee Streets, and the owner of those will donate some of those to the project. Preservation is one of the things they are concerned about as well as housing. There are two primary issues the residents are interested in: 1) the impact of the new development on their taxes and 2) being displaced from their homes. These are top concerns, these are legitimate concerns but they are not concerns to be exploited. These are concerns that have been brought to the surface that we can use this as an opportunity to educate the people so they will know what to do, how to do it, in orders to preserve their property, history and legacy.

Chair Shahid said the Maryville/Ashley is a top priority. He is fearful about it being exploited. The City just erected a pier and there are plans for Bender Park. It's going to get discovered and as West Ashley is revitalized, the fear he has is it being exploited. The role of the Commission is to help the neighbors and residents to avoid that from taking place. They have a mission to preserve and protect Maryville/Ashleyville, maintain its character, maintain the residents the live there so that they are not exploited.

Public Comment

Representative Wendell Gilliard thanked Mayor Tecklenburg for answering the letters he wrote to him. The letters that he sent to Mayor Tecklenburg were addressed to the residents of Maryville/Ashleyville. He remarked that people live less than ½ a mile away from one of the most historical communities in South Carolina. When he first got elected to City Council, there was an adult bookstore at the front entrance of that community. The one thing he promised Mr. Higgins, Mr. Richardson, Mr. Smalls and Mr. Carr that that bookstore was going to come down after they did their research. After he first held the first meeting, he knew he was going to step on toes. He stated at the meeting that this is not a reflection on the Councilmember nor the neighborhood leader, the Mayor or the association. It is about saving a community from gentrification because people are being gentrified out of their homes and apartments. This is the one thing they found out in their research is that these cities and towns that are being gentrified, if you can't come up to your city employees or state employees and give them an increase on their hourly wage where they could afford to stay in rental house or a house that is being leased out, or

they can afford to carry their kids to school and send them on to a higher institution, then gentrification will be like a cancer. That is what's happening around this country. It took them 5 ½ years to bring that bookstore down.

What you see in Maryville/Ashleyville, they have proud citizen and a lot of homes. Now they have Black, White and Hispanic. Rep. Gillard said that is the misconception about gentrification that everything is supposed to be one color. He was brought up to say what happens to one culture anywhere impacts all cultures everywhere. If you study gentrification you have to understand one thing. If he is elected he has to be the voice of some of the people, not all. He won't listen to developers as they can't tell him what to do. The people who elected him are who he is here to represent. Developers are in it for one thing – their end is to make money. They don't care who becomes homeless. They don't care who they shove aside. He cited the citizens in the trailer park on Fifth Avenue. Many of them will become homeless if it were not for the efforts of these people in the room coming to the last meetings. If it weren't for them we would not be here today or meeting with the Mayor for this specific issue. The bulldozers were going to show up on Fifth Avenue, everyone was going to go away and start pointing the fingers.

Rep. Gilliard said if we can't talk when people don't want to talk about it he was in the wrong position. He said if we can't stand for voices that are unheard, people who become homeless and homeowners are concerned about their properties, he is in the wrong position. He questioned what do you do about gentrification. They look around at other cities and see what they are doing. They are taking of those who are in need first. When gentrification comes it brings on predatory lenders. They will get one so high in debt that one would be happy to be forced out. If they can't save a historic village, whether it is Black or White, far too many times the village is always Black. He observed he has been gentrified out of the City. He can't afford a house or rent in the City because some developer came from New York, bought some property downtown and priced him out of house and home.

Rep. Gilliard invited the residents to the meeting on Saturday, June 24 at the Schoolhouse at 11 a.m. He said this is about slowly stopping gentrification. People are being gentrified out of their property.

Nettie Smalls of 945 Sycamore Avenue said she moved here in 1965 and bought the house at 945 Sycamore Avenue. They originally purchase the house for \$9000 and they have invested over \$250,000 in the house but the market value is not \$250,000 now. She couldn't understand what is happening to her community and why. People have worked and worked trying to invest in a home something didn't happen. The taxes go up and you're on a set income, and you don't make that much money, the tax rises higher than what you can afford to pay for it. When you only make so much money, how can you afford to repair your house when something goes wrong? If you can't repair your house, sooner or later they are going to condemn it and where are you going to go when you can't afford to buy a house or move away from where you are? She noted there are senior citizens who make less than she does and it's a struggle for her to make repairs. One could only imagine what it would cost people who make much less than she makes.

Mrs. Smalls said many people don't realize the struggle you put in it. She told Mayor Tecklenberg she appreciated him and hoped he hears the cry of the community because the people needed everyone's help because they are supposed to be helping them and representing them. She told them not to leave the people out there where they don't have help and no one they can talk to and let them know what their problems are. She questioned where can they go to where the tax goes up so high they can't afford it. Where do they go to get a new roof on the house but can't afford it? She noted some of the houses in the community need new roofs. She said they needed to be guided in the right direction so they can stay in their homes. They need to know resources they can go to when they need it. She questioned where does she go when she needs help and she is trying to get someone a place to stay? She said she was begging the elected officials for help.

Hazel Higgins of 970 Main Street was there to speak about being informed and being able to participate in the process. A lot of emphasis has been placed on affordable housing. Her concern was the development of Maryville/Ashleyville community, the entire community not just the affordable housing. In the beginning of this process, Maryville/Ashleyville was not really informed of the complete plans for the community. She appreciated their association president Ms. Hamilton who brought information to their meetings. But they were not given the total picture of what the plan would be for the community. She thinks that is reason why they are concerns about this plan. She asked the Mayor and the Commission

that they continue this process of informing the residents of Maryville/Ashleyville of what the plans are and give them the opportunity to participate in developing those plans and making comments on those plans because it is their community. Her family has owned that property for more than 200 years. She said it's their homes and it's a sentimental value also. She asked the Commission to respect that.

John Wesley Carr of 1039 Main Street said if it weren't for Rep. Gilliard he didn't know where they would be. He said called and told him they were taking you house. Mr. Carr said he had no idea but he heard about it. Ms. Hamilton told them about it. They said they wanted to put 71 buildings but they didn't want condominiums. They brought it down to 42 buildings. Rep. Gilliard called him and told him those 42 buildings are \$400,000 a piece and the whole community will be taxed out of their homes in a few years. He told everyone every 5 years the taxes go up. The issue they are talking about right now is he is on a fixed income and he can't afford to live in the house he has downtown. Down the street they are putting a gated community. Ashleyville is so historic he didn't know until this year Fifth Avenue is the oldest street in the state. Maryville/Ashleyville was a township and his grandfather was the last mayor of the township. JC Long was told that the Whites didn't feel comfortable that the police couldn't come into Maryville/Ashleyville at that time and arrest people. So they went up to Columbia and dissolved the township.

Mr. Carr said he lived in the house. His grandfather took the house on Fishburne Street, tore it down in pieces, put it on a barge and towed it around Charles Towne Landing and put it up. It has been there since 1904. He didn't want to see a developer come in and trick them out of their homes like they tricked them out of their town. He said that development does not need to be in Ashleyville.

A gentleman who lives on San Juan Avenue questioned if the sale on the property off Sycamore Avenue has closed. He noticed there was a surveyor going up and down his street for two days with a machine marking out water and sewer. He said someone had to approve it.

Chair Shahid said it might have been closed but he didn't really know.

Mrs. Hamilton said in reference to concerns regarding those who live in the trailer park, all but 2 persons have been relocated to other trailer parks and other arrangements. She added there is no time limit so they were looking at six months or more before whatever is finalized. They are not at that point yet.

Chair Shahid announced there will be meeting Saturday, June 24, 11a.m., at the Schoolhouse to address these concerns and the next Commission meeting will be 5 p.m., July 12.

There being no further business to discuss the meeting was adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

Marcia L. Grant,
Council Secretary

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WEST ASHLEY REVITALIZATION COMMISSION HISTORICAL SURVEY

PROPOSED QUESTIONS FOR THE COMMISSION AND PUBLIC

1. Who were and are the people you go to, or used to go to, when you had questions about the past here. Where did they live? Where did they work? Did they have deeper roots in the community that we should explore?
2. Are there interesting buildings or structures in your neighborhood that you want to know more about or that we all should know more about? Do you know of buildings in your neighborhood that have been moved from another location?
3. Do you know of photographs of families that have lived in West Ashley in the past that show West Ashley residents, structures or neighborhoods?
4. Are there any stories, ghost stories, legends or tall tales that you know that are associated with people, places or things in West Ashley?
5. What events do you remember that made an impression on you about West Ashley?
6. Are you part of a family that has lived in West Ashley for more than one generation? Do you know families that have lived for more than one generation in West Ashley?
7. Do you know of people who would be willing to talk to us about West Ashley history and be recorded?

List of suggestions for topics to explore and document

- When Joseph M. Harrison purchased the “Crafts Tract” in 1916 he converted the dance hall on the property to his home. The hall was built in 1845 and remains as a single-family residence in Moreland. The home is located on Woodward Road along the Ashley River.
- Many of the large homes that front Savannah Highway between the cross streets of Wesley Drive and Parish/Stocker Drive were built as guest homes. The Bootle Guest home (now the law offices of Grimball and Cabaniss) is located on the corner of Wesley Drive and Savannah Highway.
- Wiggers Store located on Magnolia Drive in Maryville

- The Owl's Whist Club located on Bender Street in Maryville
- 5th Avenue in Maryville is considered one of the oldest streets in SC.
- The King property and home in Maryville
- Brown Cemetery in Ashleyville
- Tomb or Ghost Island
- Carr Family Home in Ashleyville
- The community of Red Top – in 1895 Red Top was described as the “wickedest town in South Carolina” in an article published in the Illustrated American
- The “Coburg Cow” sign at the corner of Coburg Road and Savannah Highway marked the road to the dairy that was started by FA Hanckel in 196
- Bailey Farm House
- Washington Park
- Heritage Park
- Churches
 - St Andrew's Parish Church on Ashley River Road
 - Graham AME
 - Emmanuel AME in Ashleyville
 - John Wesley Methodist
 - Blessed Sacrament
 - Ashley River Baptist Church
 - Lutheran Church of the Redeemer
- Residential Developments of St. Andrew's Parish listed in the 1943 Celebration of Progress program printed by the St. Andrew's Parish Exchange Club
 - Wappoo Heights 1924
 - Windermere 1926
 - The Crescent 1926
 - Dupont & Orleans Road 1928
 - St Andrew's Heights 1928
 - Stono Park 1928
 - School View 1928

- Pinecrest Gardens 1929
 - Ashley Forest 1931
 - Carolina Terrace 1931
 - Pierpont 1932
 - Edgewater 1926
 - Avondale 1942
 - Moreland 1942
 - Byrnes Downs 1943
- Charleston County Market site on Wappoo Road
- Cemetery on Peebles
- Businesses in Avondale
- Site of POW camp
- Brick structure on Dulsey Road
- Air Harbor neighborhood built on the old Truluck Airport
- St. Andrew's Parish Fire Station #1 – Folly Road near Windermere – building still there.
- East Bay Deli on Savannah Highway – site of the first Hardee's restaurant
- WA Bikeway – SAL RR
- WA Greenway – ACL RR
- Oak Lane Grocery - now Azalea Motor Co.
- Bunch's gas station – now Home Team BBQ
- Eden Grocery Store – now home décor business
- Jewish Cemeteries on Sycamore Avenue
- Albemarle School
- Ashley Bridges

- Charles Towne Landing
 - The Plantations on the Ashley River
 - Eliza Lucas plaque on Betsy Road
 - Ashem Farm now Charleston County Park
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Charlie's list

- Judith Ladson
 - Wappoo Ferry
 - Kings Highway
 - Dupont Crossing
 - Dupont Station and commercial activity in the vicinity
 - Elliott Cut
 - Truck farming
 - Phosphate mining
 - St. Andrews Parish boundary over time
 - Guest Homes
 - Savannah Highway
 - Railroads
 - Map of West Ashley from Shaftesbury papers Listing settlers (Northbridge Park good location)
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ADD YOUR LIST HERE AND RETURN TO CHARLIE AT WestAshleyAdvocate@gmail.com: